

PROCEEDINGS OF THE HISTORIC CONSERVATION BOARD

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 26, 2001

3:00 P.M., J. MARTIN GRIESEL ROOM, CENTENNIAL PLAZA II

The Historic Conservation Board met at 3:00 P.M., in the J. Martin Griesel Room, Centennial Plaza II, with Messrs. Bloomfield, Kreider, Raser and Senhauser and Mmes. Borys, Spraul-Schmidt, Sullebarger and Wallace present. Mr. Dale was absent.

MINUTES

The minutes of the February 14, 2001 meeting were approved as corrected (motion by Spraul-Schmidt, second by Borys).

CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS, 209 WOODWARD STREET, OVER-THE-RHINE (SOUTH) HISTORIC DISTRICT

Staff member Daniel Young presented an application for a Certificate of Appropriateness for the renovation of a former warehouse into seven loft apartments. Because the project will be partially financed through an historic Investment Tax Credit, the Ohio Historic Preservation Office will review the application for final determination of several issues addressed in the staff report, including options for the treatment of the front facade.

Mr. Young indicated that exterior alterations are minimal. They include restoring lost windows and recreating the original front entryway (either as a false door with entry stair or as a shuttered window). Plans also show on the east facade of the building an access ramp with painted corrugated metal awnings and a perforated metal railing. A fabric sign will be installed on the north elevation of the building.

Mark Gunther, architect for the project, was present to answer questions.

Mr. Raser asked whether the access ramp rail will be the perforated metal panel in the drawing or the expanded metal railing shown in the photograph marked, "Example of railing proposed for east side of building along new ramp." Mr. Gunther answered that the railing will be expanded metal as shown in the photograph and as installed at 1340 Clay Street, a project previously reviewed by the Board.

Members of the Board expressed concern that the railing installed on the 1340 Clay Street roof deck (and shown in the photograph) was not approved for the parking lot fence and access ramp. That railing is to be expanded metal as approved by the Board at its July 24, 2000 meeting. Mr. Gunther stated that in the 1340 Clay Street hearing, he described the railing as expanded metal, but that the graphic might have been misleading. Mrs. Sullebarger commented that the Board expects that what is shown in the drawings is what will be built.

Board members discussed the manner in which the original front doorway should be redesigned. They concluded that the best design alternative would be to create a recessed brick infill in the shape and size of the original door opening. The surrounding brick should be reworked to provide a clean, finished appearance.

BOARD ACTION

The Board voted unanimously (motion by Bloomfield second by Borys) to approve a Certificate of Appropriateness for the rehabilitation of the former warehouse at 209 Woodward Street in the Over-the-Rhine (South) Historic District on the condition that the metal railings be constructed with perforated metal panels as shown in the project plans and that the entryway be redesigned based on Board discussion.

CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS, 305 AND 309 WEST FIFTH STREET, WEST FOURTH STREET HISTORIC DISTRICT

Mr. Young presented the staff report on the application for a COA for the renovation of these combined buildings for business uses on the first floor and residences on the upper floors. The buildings are considered contributing buildings in the West Fourth Street Historic District. Mr. Young explained that the storefront will be reworked to accommodate a means of egress from the upper floor units, but that the majority of the work will be repair/replacement in kind. The only significant addition to the building will be a new stair enclosure, but that this had been redesigned to reduce its height and mass. Mr. Young said that the work meets the historic district guidelines.

The applicant, architect Dennis Dellinger, was available to answer questions. He indicated that the present first floor office tenant will remain.

BOARD ACTION

The Board voted unanimously (motion by Kreider second by Spraul-Schmidt) to approve a Certificate of Appropriateness for the renovation of the two combined buildings at 305 and 309 West Fifth Street in the West Fourth Street Historic District for business uses on the first floor and residences on the upper floors.

PRELIMINARY DESIGN REVIEW , 323-325 WEST FIFTH STREET, REHABILITATION FOR RESIDENTIAL USE, WEST FOURTH STREET HISTORIC DISTRICT

Architect Dennis Dellinger presented the design concept for the rehabilitation of 323-325 West Fifth Street for commercial and residential use. (The property was formerly owned by Robert Olman and proposed for demolition some years ago.) The first floor front of the building will be rehabilitated as commercial space within the existing 18 foot high ceiling space. To the rear, four, four-story townhouses with new penthouse additions will be constructed within the footprint of the existing building. The townhouses will have garages facing onto a parking courtyard accessed from Fifth Street. Beneath the courtyard is a second level of parking accessed from Perry Street to the rear of the site. Two new residential units, housed in a new structure spanning the vehicle entrance, will complete the Fifth Street façade. Two additional residential units will be constructed in a new building at the rear of the site, off Perry Street. Mr. Dellinger said the project encompasses a total of eight owner-occupied residential units and one commercial space.

Members of the Board expressed enthusiasm for the proposed project and their tentative acceptance of the project as proposed. Among suggestions for consideration by the architect were:

1. Consideration of proportions of the additions and new buildings
2. Reducing the height of the vehicle access opening on Fifth Street
3. Division of the storefront into two rather than three bays flanking the door.

Ms. Sullebarger suggested that the Historical Society Library would be the most likely source of photographs of the original storefront.

**PRELIMINARY DESIGN REVIEW FOR 13-17, 19-25, 27, AND 29-33 WEST
FOURTH STREET, McALPIN'S REHABILITATION/ADAPTIVE REUSE, CITY
LEASE/REDEVELOPMENT AGREEMENT**

Staff member Adrienne Cowden introduced Robert Acker of Madison Marquette, the developer of the buildings and Brad Dixon of FRCH Design Worldwide, project architect. The two presented preliminary plans for the rehabilitation and adaptive reuse of the four buildings at West Fourth and Race Streets.

Mr. Acker said Madison Marquette originally purchased the buildings with the intent of demolishing them and replacing them with new retail, office and residential units. At the request of the City Planning Department, the firm has investigated preserving and reusing the existing buildings. The project as presented today will preserve the facades (and perhaps all the buildings) and will include office space above two floors of retail. The 150' depth of the buildings, the numerous floor levels in the buildings and an existing skywalk entrance are major concerns.

Mr. Dixon said that plans include restoration of the facade of the Frisch's building at 29-33 West Fourth Street to its original character. Likewise, the McAlpin's buildings at 13-17 and 19-25 will be rehabilitated, though the original storefronts have been lost to numerous remodelings. Mr. Dixon said that preliminary investigations indicate that pilasters, signage and other trim elements are extant beneath the present façade, though their condition is not yet known. Upper floors are relatively complete and in restorable condition. The old McAlpin's clock now at Sharon Woods Village or a replacement may be included in the renovation. Ms. Sullebarger offered to assist efforts to retrieve the McAlpin's clock if the developer wishes.

The Hall Building at 27 West Fourth Street presents the greatest challenge. The building is 150 feet deep, has little light access and has an entrance to the skywalk the owners wish to retain. Mr. Acker indicated that he would like to keep the building or its facade and develop the interior as an atrium linked to the skywalk. Even if the Hall Building is demolished, the entrance to the skywalk will be retained.

The Board assured Mr. Acker and Mr. Dixon that it understands the problems involved in this project, especially with the Hall Building. The Board considers the strongest aspect of the project as maintaining the rhythm and diversity of the streetscape and re-establishing retail uses at street level. Mr. Acker said that Madison Marquette plans to retain as much control as possible over signage and storefront design but allow sufficient design flexibility to attract desirable tenants. The Board

indicated that it was willing to work with the developer and architect in addressing these issues. Mr. Acker said that he does not plan to pursue historic designation and the 20% investment tax credit for the project, but will use the 10% non-historic credit.

BOARD ACTION

Because this is a preliminary design review, it requires no Board action.

ADMINISTRATIVE UPDATES:

Proposal Before Council to Eliminate the Requirement for Building Permits for Certain Items for One, Two and Three Family Dwellings:

Mr. Forwood reported that Councilmember DeWine's proposal was working its way through City Council. Mr. Senhauser said that he had been encouraged by the meeting he, Mr. Kreider, Mr. Langevin and Mr. Forwood had with Councilman DeWine and felt that the final proposal would address concerns expressed by the HCB. These included measures to identify work prior to construction and to provide equity for historic district property owners. Ms. Sullebarger and Mr. Forwood have independently discussed with Bill Langevin and Don Mercer providing training to B&I building inspectors assigned to historic districts and the possibility of assigning one or two inspectors specifically to historic districts city-wide.

Neighborhood Housing Retention District Changes:

Mr. Forwood reported that this item is on the agenda of the Neighborhood and Public Works Committee of City Council for February 27, 2001.

The current proposal would substitute for the NHR a special district in Over-The-Rhine. The Historic Conservation Board would review demolition of buildings based on public safety, historic value and condition of the building. The City Planning Department has recommended that, instead of creating another overlay district, City Council create a new Over-the-Rhine (North) Historic District with guidelines to address demolition. Mr. Forwood has recommended to Councilmember DeWine that guidelines also include review of new construction and site development.

Grandin Road Designation Study

Mr. Forwood and Ms. Cowden will meet February 27 with Hyde Park Community Council President Charles Desando, Robert Manley, Esq. and others to discuss the designation process. Ms. Spraul-Schmidt requested that, after that meeting, HCO staff prepare a report summarizing the information and analysis to date and present that report at the next HCB meeting for an administrative review.

Mr. Raser commented that the impetus for consideration of this scenic district was the demolition of the National Register listed Piatt-Grandin House and concern for the demolition of the Strauss residences built after 1950. Mr. Young suggested that the two National Register listed buildings in the area be considered for local landmark designation. Ms. Sullebarger said that CPA holds easements on both properties, so local designation is unnecessary.

ADJOURNMENT

As there were no other items for consideration by the Board, the meeting adjourned (motion by Sullebarger second by Wallace).

William L. Forwood
Urban Conservator

John C. Senhauser
Chairman

Date